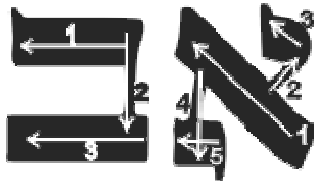
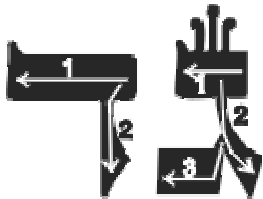


YESOD: The Tale Of the Aleph Beit Of The School Children (B. Shabbat 104a)

The Rabbis told R. Joshua b. Levi: Children have come to the Beit Hamidrash and said things the like of which was not said even in the days of Joshua the son of Nun. [Thus:]

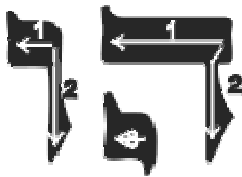


Alef Beit [means] 'learn wisdom [Alef אַלף Binah בִּינָה];

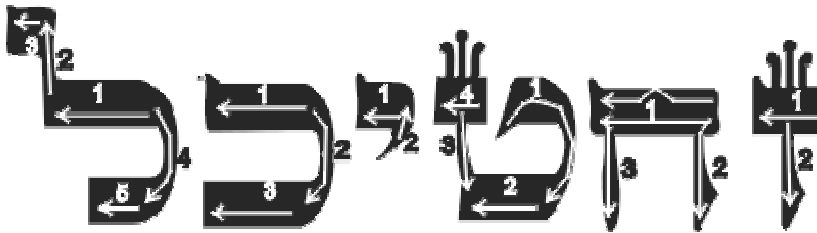


Gimmel Dalet, show kindness to the Poor [Gemol גְּמוּלַ דַּלִּים].

Why is the foot of the Gimmel stretched toward the Dalet? Because it is fitting for the benevolent to run after [seek out] the poor. And why is the roof of the Dalet stretched out toward the Gimmel? Because he [the poor] must make himself available to him. And why is the face of the Daleth turned away from the Gimmel? Because he must give him [help] in secret, lest he be ashamed of him.



He, Waw, that is the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He;

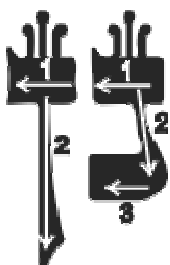


Zayyin, Het, Tet, Yud, Kaf, Lamed: [this sequence teaches,] and if you do that, the Holy One, blessed be He, will sustain [Zan זָן] you, be

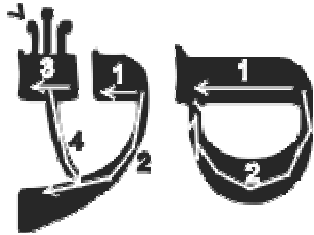
gracious [Hen הֵן] unto you, show goodness [metib מְטִיב] to you, give you a heritage [Yerushah], and bind a crown [Kether כֶּתֶר] on you in the world to come.



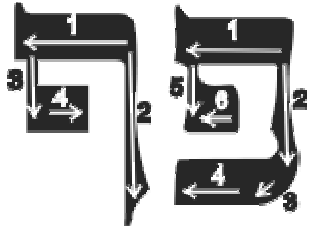
The open Mem and the closed Mem [denote] open teaching [Ma'amar מֵאָמַר] and closed (esoteric) [satum סָתוּם] teaching.



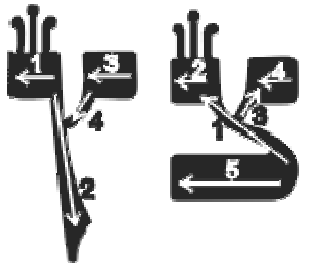
The bent Nun and the straight Nun: the faithful [Ne'eman נְאִמָּן] if bent [humble], [will ultimately be] the faithful, straightened.



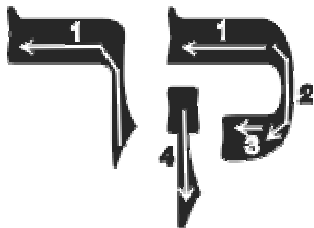
Samek, ‘ayyin: support [Semak סמוך] the poor [‘aniyyim עניים].
 Another interpretation: devise [‘aseh עשה] mnemonics
 [Simanin סימנים] in the Torah and [thus] acquire [memorize] it.



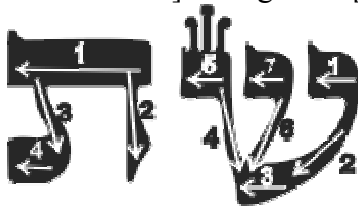
The bent pe and the straight pe [intimate] an open mouth [peh פה], a closed mouth.



A bent tzaddi and a straight tzaddi: the righteous [tzaddik צדיק] is bent [in this world]; the righteous is straightened [in the next world].
 But isn't that identical with the faithful bent [and] the faithful straightened?(nun?)-The Torah added humility to his humility; hence [we learn that] the Torah was given under great submissiveness.



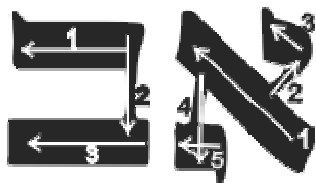
Kuf stands for holy [Kadosh קדוש]; Resh for wicked [Rasha' רשע]: why is the face of the Kuf averted from, the Resh? The Holy One, blessed be He, said: I cannot look at the wicked. And why is the crown of the Kuf turned toward the Resh? The Holy One, blessed be He, saith: If he repents, I will bind a crown on him like Mine. And why is the foot of the Kuf suspended? [To show] that if he repents, he can enter and be brought in [to God's favour] through this [opening]



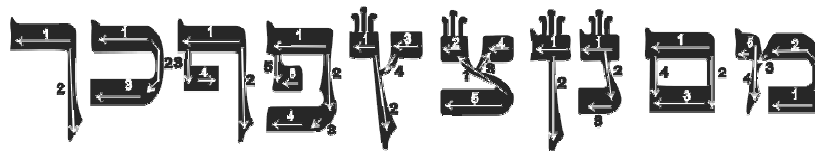
SHin stands for falsehood [SHeker שקר]; Tav for truth [emet אמת]: why are the letters of Sheker close together (in the alphabet), whilst those of ‘emet are far apart (first, middle and last)?
 Falsehood is frequent, truth is rare. And why does falsehood [stand] on one foot, whilst truth has a brick-like foundation? Truth can stand, falsehood cannot stand.

Genesis Rabbah I:10

R. Judah b. Pazzi lectured on the Creation story, in accordance with this interpretation of Bar Kappara. Why was it created with a beit? To teach you that there are two worlds.⁴ Another interpretation: why with a beit? Because it connotes blessing (berakah בְּרָכָה). And why not



with an alef? Because it connotes cursing.(אָרוּר) Another interpretation: Why not with an alef? In order not to provide a justification for heretics to plead, 'How can the world endure, seeing that it was created with the language of cursing?' Hence the Holy One, blessed be He, said, 'Lo, I will create it with the language of blessing, and would that it may stand!' ... R. Leazar b. Abinah said in R. Aha's name: For twenty-six generations the alef complained before the Holy One, blessed be He, pleading before Him: 'Sovereign of the Universe! I am the first of the letters, yet Thou didst not create Thy world with me!' God answered: 'The world and its fullness were created for the sake of the Torah alone. Tomorrow, when I come to reveal My Torah at Sinai, I will commence with none but thee: I (anoki אֲנֹכִי) am the Lord your God' (Ex. XX, 2). Bar Hutah said: Why is it called alef? Because it denotes the sum of a thousand, viz. The word which commanded for a thousand (elef) generations (Ps. CV, 8).



Genesis Rabbah I:11

R. Simon said in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi: Manzapak (מִנְצַפ"ךְ i.e. the final forms) is a Mosaic halachah from Sinai. R. Jeremiah said in the name of R. Hiyya b. Abba: They are what the zofim [צוֹפִים; i.e. early prophets] instituted. It once happened on a stormy day that the Sages did not attend the House of Assembly [i.e. the Academy]. Some children were there and they said, 'Come and let us study [the letters instituted by] the Seers. Why are there two forms for mem mem, nun nun, tzade tzade, peh peh, and kaf kaf? It teaches [that the Torah was transmitted] from utterance to utterance[מֵאמֵר], from Faithful to faithful [נֶאֱמָן], from Righteous to righteous [צַדִּיק], from mouth to mouth[פֶּה], and from hand to hand.[כַּף] (From utterance to utterance-from the utterance of the Holy One, blessed be He, to the utterance of Moses. From Faithful to faithful-from the Almighty, who is designated, "God, faithful King," to Moses, who is designated faithful, as it is written, *He [sc. Moses] is faithful (E.V. "trusted") in all My house* (Num. XII, 7). From Righteous to righteous-from God, who is designated righteous, as it is written, *The Lord is righteous all His ways* (Ps. CXLV, 17), to Moses who is designated righteous, as it is written, *He executed the righteousness of the Lord* (Deut. XXXIII, 21).¹ From mouth to mouth-from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, to the mouth of Moses. From hand to hand:)² from the hand of the Holy One, blessed be He, to the hand of Moses.' The scholars noted them, and they grew to be great sages in Israel; some say that they were R. Eliezer, R. Joshua, and R. Akiba. They applied to them the verse, *Even a child is known by his doings, etc.* (Prov. XX, 11)